

DESTINY *from B1*

school best throw. Going into the next season, she was filled with doubt.

"I thought maybe I was done. I had that situation where it was like, 'Do I have more to go? Should I still be doing this? Am I wasting my time? I could be working and making money or something,'" she said. "And so I prayed about that and what not and then I PR'd. And then so I was like, 'Okay thank you. I'm supposed to be here, apparently.'"

In the first meet of her sophomore season Dawson threw farther than 130 feet for the first time and was back on track. And then at Big West Outdoor Championships she exploded for a throw of 146 feet.

"At conference the right things happened, I don't know. Training was good up until then but I wouldn't say it was anything extraordinary," she said. "So yeah, I don't know. I just... I did well."

After the season Dawson took summer classes and with her family in Oregon, expenses in Hawaii and not feeling appreciated on the team, it was time to head back to the mainland. After deciding, she and her boyfriend, Darren Voigt, had the task of packing up all their things, crossing the ocean and finding a new place to live all within a few weeks. They made it work and Dawson became a Beaver.

Knowing she was going to take three more years to finish school and having two years of NCAA eligibility left, Dawson decided to redshirt.

"I know that has been a beneficial thing for some of my athletes in the past. Gives you a whole year to get stronger, learn technique," said Oregon

State throwing coach David Dumble. "Because things are different, we lift differently than she ever has and some of the technical knowledge is different so she's really had to grow a lot that way. The last couple years, it's crazy. Just little by little she's a lot better athlete."

Training in the program but competing unattached, Dawson continued to improve on her marks and set what would have been a school-record of 162-9 had she been competing as a Beaver. While she was pleased to have thrown it and disappointed it didn't count, with the help of hindsight Dawson sees that it was a good thing.

"If you think about it realistically, I would have gone to regionals and competed, but that was an immense PR that I had never gotten close to any other time. And even on my last competition after that, I didn't get close to it again. So realistically it's a good thing that it didn't count because this year counts and the next year counts," she said.

Next year counts. But before the new season came, things changed in her personal life. After financial issues in her family, she became the guardian for her then, eight and 13-year-old step-brothers. Dawson, and her live-in boyfriend Voigt, suddenly had parental responsibilities.

"It's not necessarily easy especially when you're not used to taking care of people. But at the same time, it's like, I'm so involved in their lives now and that's amazing to watch them grow," she said. "And I was really worried in the past that I wasn't able to be there as their big sister. And now I definitely get to do that."

Dawson credits Voigt, who works a full-time job, on helping things run smoothly.



Dawson places fifth for Cottage Grove at the state meet in 2014.

With responsibilities of being a guardian, a full-time student and an athlete, Dawson continued to excel in javelin. In her first season competing for OSU, Dawson has shined all year and now has improved to throw 168-9. But for her and Dumble, it's not about her longest throw but about being consistent.

"I don't really like to talk about 'Oh, I'm going to hit this mark.' That really wasn't good for me especially back in the day when I was trying to throw 130 feet. The one time I finally threw much further than 130 feet was when I changed that mindset," she said.

Now the idea is to make the record-setting throws not just an outlier but something to consistently hit. Dumble and Dawson are focused on improving her average throw.

"I said that I wanted my average to be around what my PR last year was which is actually more

than that now which is not something that I necessarily expected but I'm very happy about it," said Dawson.

Placing third at the Pac-12 Championships where, she secured a spot at the NCAA West Region Championships. With the top 12 throwers moving on to the NCAA Championships, Dawson had the 16th best throw going into the day and was just trying to fight for a coveted spot.

"When I was on the runway I was pretty focused, but when I was not on the runway I was just thinking, 'Okay, what place am I in? What girls do I know can throw further than me? What girls can I see are having a bad day and probably won't throw farther than me and where are they now?'"

With one thrower left in the competition, Dawson watched someone who had previously thrown farther than her approach the runway. "So it was very stressful. And she threw and I actually thought she might have thrown further than me so I started packing my stuff up and I was like, 'Nice try.' I was like bittersweet," she said. "But then the mark came up on the board and I was like 'Oh my gosh, no way!' It was pretty crazy."

Now Dawson is headed back to Eugene and Hayward Field to compete at NCAAs. While Dumble has aspirations for her to become an All-American and her friends have high hopes for her, Dawson is just focused on throwing.

"I'm just wanting to do the best I can on the day. You know. I want to have fun and I want to do what I can do. You know, leave it all on the track and I don't want to walk away thinking, 'I could have done better,'" she said. "I just want to do the best I can. Whatever that may be, whatever mark that is, whatever place I get."



Congratulations CLASS OF 2018!

Austin Cardwell

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 11-24-99

Parents: CASEY & SONYA CARDWELL

Grandparents: ROY & MARLYS SIMONS

Cora Cook

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 3-13-00

Parents: REBECCA COOK AND MARK GABRIELSON

Grandparents: AL & DONNA WALSH; BARB STEGALL AND BUTCH GABRIELSON

Jackson Perkins

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 2-20-00

Parents: ALLEN & MELINDA

Grandparents: DON & LINDA PERKINS

Jasmine Ward

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 11-23-99

Parents: ROB & GINA STOCKTON

Gabe Glenn

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 4/28/00

Parents: CHRIS & SMILEY

Grandparents: TOOT & KAROLINE NELSON, JOHN & SUE GLENN

Josef Pifer

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 5-5-00

Parents: JERRY & CONNIE PIFER

Kyle Conley

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 4-7-00

Parents: TONY & CASEY GRAVES

Grandparents: DAN & LYNN MINER; BOB & SANDY CONLEY

Jennifer Simons

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 7-17-00

Parents: DONNY & LEANNE SIMONS

Grandparents: ROY & MARTY SIMONS AND BETTY KRUMLAUF

Mitchell Johnson

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 11-8-00

Parents: BRYANT JOHNSON & RENEE SOUSA

Grandparents: TOMMIE & PAT JONES

Peyton Louise Kidd

Lincoln Middle School

Born: 3-4-04

Parents: BLAID AND APRIL KIDD

Grandparents: LARRY & LOUISE VIOLETTE; AL & SHARON KIDD

Markus Julien

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 10-6-00

Parents: MARC & MYLA JULIEN

Grandparents: PERRY & SOLITA JULIEN; ROBERT & GERALDINE ALESSANDRA

Shyenne Plaisted-Jones

Cottage Grove High School

Born: 10-25-99

Parents: KARL & RENEE

Grandparents: SHIRLEY PLAISTED & THE LATE LEE R PLAISTED

Tanner Cooper

AL KENNEDY High School

Born: 7-5-00

Parents: JAMI COOPER

Grandparents: JULIE COOPER

Sammie Jacobs

ORVA

Born: 1-2-04

Parents: RICHARD & MANDI JACOBS

Grandparents: BILL & DIANA RAMSEY; RICHARD & DEBBIE HUDY